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CROP INSURANCE NEWS

Broadcast by John A. Bird, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, and Forney Rankin, Radio Service, Thursday, June 29, 1939, in the Department of Agriculture period, National Farm and Home Hour.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

RANKIN:

And now we have John A. Bird, who gives us news on the wheat crop insurance program from time to time. What do you have on tap today, John?

BIRD:

Well, Forney, suppose we start with insurance payments to farmers who have lost their wheat crops -- those are in the spotlight right now. To date the Crop Insurance Corporation has paid out nearly 600,000 bushels to farmers whose crops have been destroyed by some unavoidable hazard.

RANKIN:

I understand losses are pretty heavy this year.

BIRD:

In some parts of the wheat belt they are -- For example, down in Oklahoma the state crop insurance supervisor estimates that about 22 hundred insured growers have lost their crops through drought. In Texas nearly 1,000 growers have reported losses, and in Kansas about 400.

RANKIN:

I'll bet those growers are glad they had the foresight to take out crop insurance.

BIRD:

There's not much doubt of that -- and the business men in their communities are glad, too.

RANKIN:

For example --?

BIRD:

Take Briscoe county, Texas. The crop there was a complete failure -- a wipe-out. The only wheat income in that county this year will be from crop insurance. About half of the growers in the county were insured -- 18,000 acres of wheat altogether. Dry weather took their crop - but growers in that county will get something like 90,000 bushels of wheat to sell -- through insurance.

RANKIN:

That will make quite a difference in the business of the county.

BIRD:

You get the most vivid picture of just what crop insurance means when you talk to farmers who have had bad luck with their crops. Down in

(over)

Caddo county, Oklahoma, I talked with a young man by the name of Floyd Kimble. He just started farming two years ago and naturally a crop failure is a far more serious blow to him than it would be to an established farmer. Well, his first year his crop was nearly ready for harvest, when rust shriveled the grain.

RANKIN:

That's tough -- in his first year of farming, too.

BIRD:

It was, but Floyd Kimble is a determined young man and he managed to plant another crop last fall -- 104 acres of wheat. However, he knew this was his last chance, and he jumped at the opportunity to insure his crop. And it was a good thing, too, because this spring drought and high winds got his wheat. However, Floyd Kimble is getting 884 bushels of wheat from the crop insurance reserves. That isn't as good as a bumper crop, but it did finance the planting of some corn and cotton. Best of all, Floyd Kimble says it will see him through the year.

RANKIN:

So crop insurance kept a young farmer in farming.

BIRD:

Yes -- incidents like that give you an idea why county committees are so interested in their work. And say! Here's a case that really is different -- where crop insurance is helping to pay the preacher's salary.

RANKIN:

Paying the preacher's salary -- how is that?

BIRD:

Let me explain. You'll recall from your agricultural history that wheat growing was first made possible in the Great Plains by the Mennonites.

RANKIN:

You mean the ones who brought hard winter wheat to Kansas?

BIRD:

That's right. They came to south central Kansas along in 1871 and they brought with them the hard red winter wheat, all the way from the steppes of Russia.

RANKIN:

But how about this preacher's salary?

BIRD:

I'm coming to that. Out at Inman, Kansas last fall the congregation of the Inman Mennonite church decided to plant a wheat crop which was to help pay the salary of the preacher, John E. Kaufman. They put out 40 acres. These are the sons and grandsons of the original wheat-bringers and I don't need to tell you that they know how to grow wheat. And they know something about the risks of growing wheat, too, so they insured

the crop. That crop had a good start, but drought wrecked it later in the season. Now the loss has been adjusted, and crop insurance is contributing 226 bushels to the minister's salary.

RANKIN:

It seems quite appropriate that wheat should be used to pay the salary of a leader of the people who have contributed so much to the wheat industry of this county.

BIRD:

And that winds up my news for today, Fornoy.

RANKIN:

Thank you, John, for these side-lights on the wheat crop insurance program. You have just heard John A. Bird of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, reporting on the latest developments in that program.

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